



Montlake Community Center
Public Meeting #3
February 1, 2005
Meeting Notes

Guests present: Kristin Tolefson, Artist; Joan Peterson, City of Seattle Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs. Don Carlson, Carlson Architects.

Staff Present: David Goldberg, Parks Project Planner; Dan Johnson, Parks Project Manager; Karen Lynch, Parks Public Relations Specialist.

6:30 p.m. Welcome and Sign-In. David introduced Kristen Tolefson, Project Artist. He reviewed general project background information. The Pro Parks Levy (PPL) provided just under \$3M for this expansion; he then added some background on PPL, and the scope of expansion based on the PPL and design program for the expansion.

A brief schedule review: Construction documents expected to be completed by early Fall, 2005; the funding becomes available in 2006. Construction starts in early 2006 and completes sometime in Fall, 2006. The Project Advisory Team (PAT) was introduced and their role explained – some PAT members were in attendance. David explained that the PAT wanted to focus the addition on west side of the gym; a big priority was to create rooms that can be used flexibly over time. The final design shows a decision to connect the existing gym to the new addition. The Tudor building had been looked at by the PAT in terms of options for its use. In January, 2005, Parks was able to have the Tudor building (the original community center building) designated by the Landmarks Board. This historic designation provides certain criteria to work within, and limits what can be done to the Tudor building.

Questions/Comments from those attending:

- Can the public still give input to change this design? Is the cost per square foot high? What is the total amount of added space? (Answer: Total space will be nearly 7,000 square feet, which includes about 1,000 square feet of remodel to existing spaces within the gym)

David explained that exterior design is pretty much set. It may be possible to do some things differently, but input from the two previous public meetings on design has provided comments on the design direction.

Don Carlson, spoke of having presented the design to the City Design Commission recently and getting approval. A discussion followed regarding the intent for design, and fulfillment of that intent.

Don summarized the intent of the design:

- √ Make optimal use of outdoor space
- √ Capitalize on the water, and shoreline nearby. Orient the addition toward the water.
- √ Enhance space between rooms
- √ Improve entry points and access to the parking area
- √ Try to “seamlessly” enhance the existing space by extending a roofline across, and covering the entryways to building
- √ Add skylights to the main public ‘circulation’ spaces to gain natural light from above; also make it possible to view the trees and park from each end of the main circulation area
- √ Sustainable priorities: natural venting techniques; add natural light; reduce electrical use
- √ Use similar materials to create a building that ultimately does *not* look like it was partially designed in the 1970s and partially in 2005
- √ Integrate new space around the gym using a courtyard; meant to help increase building “flow” better between the existing Tudor building and the addition.

The addition on the west side of the gym to include:

- An “activity room”
- family shower / bathroom accessible from the outside (converted from an existing restroom)
- multi-purpose dividable room
- a kitchen
- Existing offices will be converted to a lounge space with bigger windows (added) for viewing the play area and outdoors
- The focus for the existing gym is adding more seating and spectator access and, by converting other space, a room may be created that could be used as a fitness space
Public Comment: a “seating alcove” for gym is probably not going to be big enough; can it be made bigger? (A suggestion was discussed about making the windows in the seating alcove for spectators operable so they can be ‘in the same room’ at a sporting event; when not used for spectators, windows could be closed to divide the two spaces.)

No conclusion was reached at this meeting about how much, or whether, to use project funds to upgrade the existing Tudor building (within historical-designation criteria).

Exterior art:

Joan Peterson, Arts & Cultural Affairs Office introduced the project artist, Kristin Tolefson, and gave a brief summary of Kristin's background:

Community Center Art: A working art plan has been created by Carolyn Law at Arts & Cultural Affairs for nine community centers that are included for Levy expansion funding. Joan explained the plan's basic intent -- to make exterior art as an icon or a beacon for each community. Joan explained the artist selection process used. Kristin was a Fullbright scholar in the 1990's, working in England. She is an installation artist; her work is based on fractal theory and "collections". She has experience in metalwork, and other mediums.

Kristin briefly talked about having spent time speaking with the Montlake community and with the project architects regarding this project. Her two conceptual thoughts for the project are, 1) correlation between land and water: such as a vessel or basin, and 2) discovery that the property used to be a large dahlia farm. She also showed the group a few small scale examples of her studio art.

Question: what the next step in development is for the art? Kristen said she'll be bringing three options to the PAT, whose meetings are also open to the public. She will also present ideas to the Arts Commission at one of their regular meetings, also open to the public to attend.

Comment was made that this area is full of crows (9,000 crows near in the area).

Kristen also mentioned that most likely she will create a welded-steel sculpture; and she is paired with a mentor for this project who has a lot of public art experience. She also is hoping to include translucency in the artwork, with possibly a glass (light) element. I

Inside the community center there will be other display options for other artists. A couple of suggestions were made by the public: 1) consider a theme of modes of transportation or movement, e.g. bikes, cars, boats; 2) water would be a good element to incorporate if possible.

7:45 p.m. The meeting attendees were asked for comments on space and design

- 1) Focusing resources on added spectator space (gym) vs. upgrading the Tudor building:

General feeling seemed to be that adding a maximum spectator space in the existing Gym is a popular idea. For the Tudor, if any funding were available, the current plan is to upgrade main room elements, and take the staff office and perhaps create a small

kitchenette in that space. Currently there is not detailed information on costs for upgrades to this building. The project budget is close to the maximum allowed. Dan Johnson stated that sometimes we can do a “bid-additive” item for contractors if we get a low enough construction bid, and may be able to try to add this into the bid (this is not definite).

Comment (Ted Choi): upgrading the Tudor building is a “must” for the community. He also referenced a letter from Ken Schubert about the modular building on site; they want the modular building retained and want the Tudor space renovation made a higher priority. He adds that this is the second highest-use community center in the whole system. Parks staff reiterated that the PAT agreed to prioritize creating new space. A question posed: Do attendees want Parks to reduce the square footage proposed in order to have more money for Tudor renovation? Reaction was mixed; however one attendee mentioned that the per square foot cost calculation includes many elements apart from construction, in part including the cost of the public process; permits, furnishing, equipment and other expenses.

- 2) Dan commented that the costs for placing the addition would be about the same on North, or on the South side of the gym as on the west. **Question:** do construction costs include furnishings and equipment? Yes. **Comment** was made by one attendee who likes the design since it would be less “isolated” than the current building, and create more “community”. **Comments** regarding lighting in the Tudor and the new space): get rid of fluorescents which cannot be dimmed for events at night; this would help increase rentals and use. **Question:** whether it will be possible to block out light for movies during the daytime? -and- whether there is soundproofing to block out the noise of the 520 freeway? (The designer will address both of these issues.) **Question:** will there be enough storage for tables and chairs, enough for any use? Dan replied that storage is a high priority and that our equipment lists are standardized so that the designers can plan the physical sizes and locations of storage accurately. **Questions:** can the design “plow any savings realized” back into gym seating for spectators (would like to seem 10 more seats added) and, would it then be possible to fix up the Tudor building as separate project at a later time? **Question:** is it possible to “bump out” windows in gym and put spectator seating inside that space (along the whole wall)? **Question:** Will the courtyard be a heated, interior space? **Comment:** surprise at doing away with converting the showers (reply- looking into this issue, information was that people do not use the community center showers much; they are fairly “public”,

and many community centers are converting them into family showers. An option is a key-lock shower; however, even these are not used a lot.)

Concluding comment: attendees seem okay with the idea of operable windows in the gym for spectators.

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Final question: What is the plan for 'compacting' the land where the addition will be? Parks landscape architect will work on this.

Project Schedule:

More detailed look at the project schedule. The community center and it's programs will be closed in about a year (January, 2006), until Fall of 2006. The playfield and play area/parking will stay open, with a fence around it, to allow access – plan is to use the tennis court as a staging area for construction equipment. The Tudor building will be closed during that time and the staff will be relocated elsewhere. Start time for construction noise is 8:00 a.m.; normally work stops by 4:00 p.m. Will look for a place(s) for construction workers to park during the project. Construction bid period is this winter (winter 2005).

Next Steps:

David concluded: next step is to complete design development; the PAT will meet again this spring and talk about the exterior art and the Arts Commission may hold a meeting for the public in the spring. The existing community center will have 50% more space added when construction has been completed.

Contact David/Dan with any questions.

8:30 p.m. Adjourned